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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**ALAMO BEGINS PROCESS TO IMPLEMENT CROSS COMMISSION AGREEMENT**

ALAMO, N.M. – Seven county deputies from Socorro County in New Mexico received training on March 14-15 from Navajo Nation Judicial Branch staff so that they may begin to provide law enforcement services for the Alamo Chapter in Alamo, New Mexico.

Alamo is one of three satellite communities of the Navajo Nation. It is located about 57 miles southeast of Socorro, N.M., and has a population of 1,183, according to the Census 2000. The Alamo Navajo community has 42.5 percent of children living below the poverty level and an unemployment level of 72.5 percent, according to the U.S. Census 2000.

“This is a good collaboration with county law enforcement to address ongoing disparities in law enforcement services for frontier areas of the Navajo Nation,” said Regina Roanhorse, court administrator for Alamo Court. “It will begin a process of addressing the crime rates in the community.”

Alamo is a very remote chapter. It is served by the Crownpoint Police District, which is more than three hours away. Navajo police can spend more than six hours to arrest, detain and book one person, leaving other calls unanswered, said Roanhorse.

An agreement was signed in 2009 by Governor Bill Richardson, Socorro County officials and Navajo Nation officials to bring in more law enforcement for the community by cross commissioning Socorro County Sheriff’s deputies. The deputies would have the authority to enforce criminal and traffic laws of the

Navajo Nation and be able to file cases with the Navajo Nation To'Hajiilee-Alamo Judicial District courts. The agreement is only one of two agreements entered into by the Navajo Nation and the state of New Mexico, said Roanhorse. The only other agreement is with McKinley County.

Staff attorney Dan Moquin and Peacemaking Program liaison Albert Begaye conducted training for the county deputies. The training from Moquin consisted of federal Indian law, the federal Tribal Law and Order Act and the Navajo Nation Criminal Code, Children's Code and Motor Vehicle Code. Begaye conducted training for the deputies on peacemaking, Diné bi beenahaz'aanii, and Diné history, language, culture and clanship.

According to the agreement, deputies shall complete a 16-hour training course provided by the Navajo Nation to become cross-commissioned. Patrolling in Alamo by the deputies can begin once required certifications are issued.

The agreement between the Navajo Nation and Socorro County Sheriff's Office states it is "to prevent each jurisdiction from becoming a sanctuary for the violators of the laws of the other; to prevent inter-jurisdictional flight; and, to foster greater respect for the laws of each jurisdiction by the more certain application thereof..."

For more information, contact Regina Roanhorse, court administrator, To'Hajiilee-Alamo Judicial District, at (505) 908-2817.

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